

1996

## Poems

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## Poems

### Abstract

FOR THE OTHER FALLEN, Aboriginal Anzac

14. Or has he? I think the question remains open.
15. The comparison with Peter Mathers' *Trap* is less obvious, despite evident similarities of content and some similarity of style, mainly because of what I see as a hesitation in Mathers' point of view. While much of the novel apparently expressed deeply felt anger, there is a certain jokiness, a tendency to give way to punning, which is not, I think, integrated into the fabric of the novel. The result is a 'dispersal' of effect which I do not find in *Burn* or even in Herbert's more comic-apocalyptic passages in *Capricornia*. See Herbert's *Capricornia* ([1937] Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1972); *Seven Emus* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1959); and especially, *Poor Fellow My Country* ([1975] London: Pan, 1977). Cf. Peter Mathers, *Trap* (Melbourne: Cassell, 1966).

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## Bruce Dawe

### FOR THE OTHER FALLEN

You fought here for your country.

Where are your monuments?

You resisted the invader as best you knew how.

Where are your songs of those days?

When you were captured you were not prisoners-of-war.

That would have been awkward.

You had the misfortune of occupying 'unoccupied land'.

You had to correct your gross error.

There was a prisoner tradition waiting to be unfolded.

Tales resilient as ironbark.

Your share in them was minimal and negative.

You were rather slow to understand this.

The bush and the stone and the stream.

The tree. The plain.

The special green. The faded calico blue.

They were your last line of resistance.

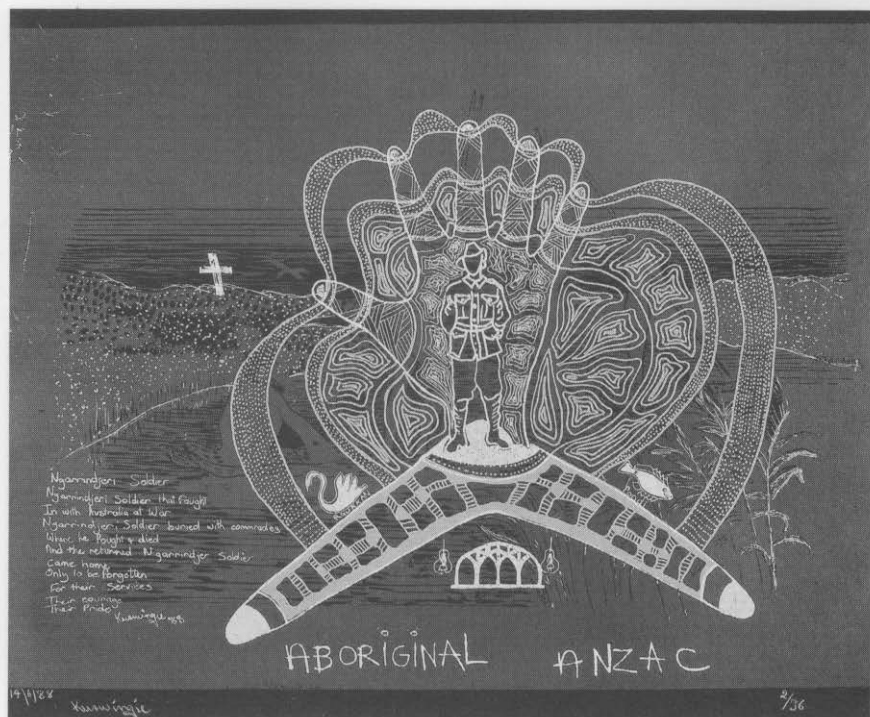
You fought here for your country.

Where are your monuments?

The difficulties we have in belonging

– these, these are your cenotaph.

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## Aboriginal Anzac

Ngarrindjeri Soldier  
 Ngarrindjeri Soldier that fought  
 In with Australia at War  
 Ngarrindjeri Soldier buried with comrades  
 Where he fought & died  
 And the returned Ngarrindjeri Soldier  
 Came home  
 Only to be forgotten  
 For their Services  
 Their courage  
 Their Pride

Kurwingie '88